

Births Decline in Minnesota in 2008 and 2009

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- Births and fertility rates in Minnesota fell between 2007 and 2009.
- The pattern of decline and results in other states suggest the decline in births may be related to the recent recession.
- The drop in births was greatest among younger and less-educated women.
- Births fell among both foreign-born and U.S.-born women.

After rising earlier in the 2000s, the number of births in Minnesota fell in 2008 and 2009. There were 73,675 births in 2007. This declined to 72,382 in 2008 and 70,617 in 2009. The general fertility rate, the number of births per 1,000 women ages 15 to 44, dropped from 69.6 in 2007 to 67.5 in 2009.

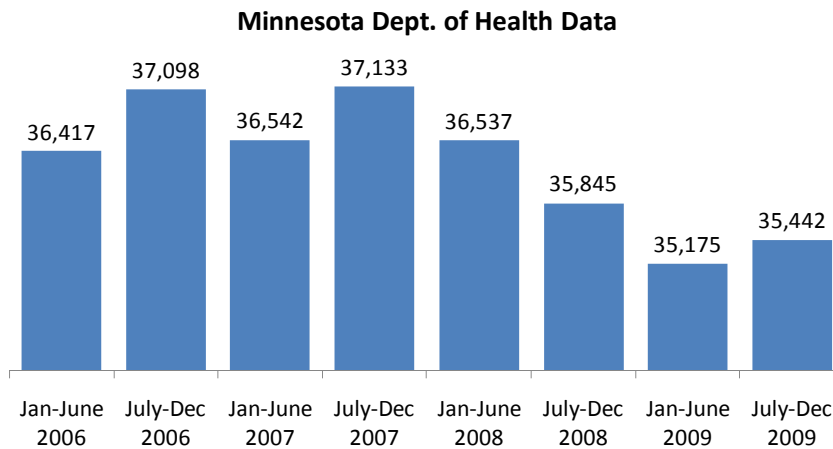
Evidence suggests at least part of the recent decrease may be related to the slumping economy. It appears some Minnesotans have chosen to postpone or forego having children because of financial uncertainty. A report from the Pew Research Center supports the idea that the recession has affected births. Pew's analysis found greater declines in fertility in states most affected by the economic downturn. The Pew study also cites survey results showing many families reported delaying births due to economic factors.

Another hint that the fall in births is tied to economic trends lies in pattern of change. Earlier in the 2000s, when births in Minnesota were increasing, gains were widespread across age and educational groups. This is in contrast with what occurred between 2007 and 2009, when the decrease in births was concentrated among groups most vulnerable to unemployment and financial uncertainty: the young and the less educated.

Comparing January to June and July to December periods in each year shows that there was a big decline in the July to December figures between 2007 and 2008. Births were higher in

the last six months of 2009 than in the first six months of the same year, suggesting the recession effect may be leveling off.

Births in Minnesota, 2006-2009



Births fall more for teens and women in their early twenties

Births and birth rates fell more for younger women than for older women between 2007 and 2009. The age-specific fertility rate for women ages 15 to 19 dropped 14 percent, and for women 20 to 24 the rate fell nine percent. In contrast, the rates for women in their thirties showed little change and the rate for women in their forties rose.

Age-Specific Fertility Rates, General Fertility Rates and Total Fertility Rates Minnesota, 2000 to 2009

Age	Age-specific Fertility Rates:										Percent Change, 2007- 2009
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
Under 20	29.9	27.4	27.5	26.5	26.6	25.9	27.7	28.4	26.9	24.5	-13.7
20 to 24	85.5	84.5	85.7	84.5	83.9	82.2	84.5	84.0	80.4	76.3	-9.1
25 to 29	122.1	121.9	125.4	131.7	134.0	136.1	140.9	138.1	132.7	127.8	-7.5
30 to 34	108.1	106.9	109.4	114.7	115.0	115.2	118.8	120.4	120.1	119.1	-1.1
35 to 39	41.8	42.6	44.4	47.8	50.3	51.8	53.3	51.3	50.9	50.2	-2.1
40+	8.2	8.7	8.5	9.0	8.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	10.1	10.9	10.6
General Fertility Rate	62.2	61.3	62.8	65.0	65.8	66.5	69.2	69.6	68.8	67.5	-3.1
Total Fertility Rate	1979	1960	2005	2071	2093	2104	2175	2160	2106	2044	-5.4

Age data are from midyear Census estimates, downloaded from:

<http://www.census.gov/popest/states/asrh/>

Birth data are from the Minnesota Center for Health Statistics.

The rate for women under age 20 divides all births occurring to women under age 20 by the population ages 15 to 19.

The rate for women over age 40 divides all births occurring to women over 40 by the population ages 40 to 44.

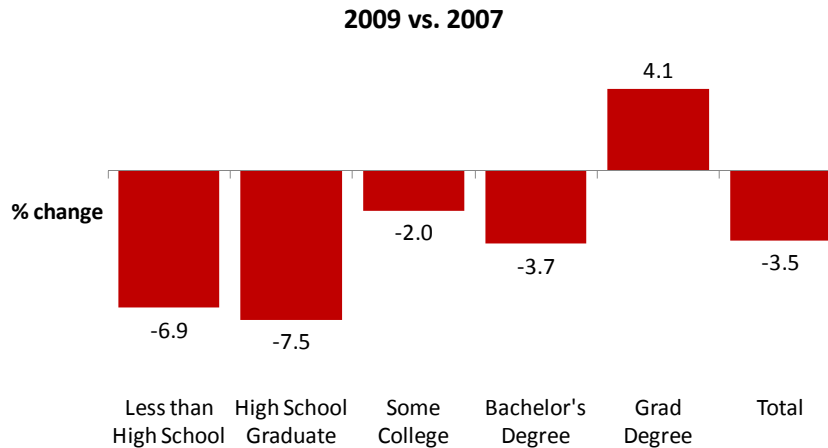
The general fertility rate (GFR) is the birth rate per 1,000 women ages 15 to 44.

The total fertility rate (TFR) is the average lifetime births per woman if current age-specific rates remain constant.

Births decline most among the least educated

Between 2007 and 2009, the number of births to Minnesota women who did not complete high school fell 7 percent, and births to women with a high school diploma and no further education dropped eight percent. There were smaller declines for women who attended but did not finish college and among those who have a Bachelor's degree. Births to women with a graduate degree increased.

Births decline more among Minnesota women who did not attend college



Single births drop; multiple births rise

Singleton births fell between 2007 and 2009 (-4.4 percent), while multiple births (for example twins and triplets) grew 2.6 percent. This is consistent with the shifting age pattern of births. Multiple births are more frequent among older mothers, and births among older women declined less than among younger women. Multiple births comprised 3.7 percent of all 2009 births, up from 3.4 percent in 2007.

Births fall in majority of counties

Births declined in 63 of Minnesota's 87 counties and rose in 24 counties from 2007 to 2009. The largest numerical decreases occurred in Hennepin, Anoka, Wright and Scott Counties, all in the Twin Cities area. Rural counties including Rock, Kanabec, Jackson, Martin, Wilkin and Lac qui Parle, recorded the highest rates of decline. It should be noted that the percentage change in births in small counties fluctuates considerably because of the small number of births in any given year.

Minnesota Births by County: 2007, 2008 and 2009

	2007	2008	2009	Number Change, 2007-2009	% Change, 2007-
Minnesota	73,675	72,382	70,617	-3,058	-4.2
Aitkin	157	144	144	-13	-8.3
Anoka	4,543	4,378	4,288	-255	-5.6
Becker	429	477	442	13	3.0
Beltrami	734	768	683	-51	-6.9
Benton	615	623	554	-61	-9.9
Big Stone	68	54	72	4	5.9
Blue Earth	800	802	751	-49	-6.1
Brown	281	322	297	16	5.7
Carlton	413	419	414	1	0.2
Carver	1,269	1,194	1,142	-127	-10.0
Cass	354	373	329	-25	-7.1
Chippewa	166	152	170	4	2.4
Chisago	681	631	642	-39	-5.7
Clay	782	780	771	-11	-1.4
Clearwater	118	121	108	-10	-8.5
Cook	53	48	49	-4	-7.5
Cottonwood	136	129	133	-3	-2.2
Crow Wing	809	764	784	-25	-3.1
Dakota	5,592	5,570	5,453	-139	-2.5
Dodge	270	293	271	1	0.4
Douglas	413	427	424	11	2.7
Faribault	160	147	169	9	5.6
Fillmore	309	277	263	-46	-14.9
Freeborn	361	391	381	20	5.5
Goodhue	589	577	573	-16	-2.7
Grant	73	64	69	-4	-5.5
Hennepin	16,848	16,566	16,334	-514	-3.1
Houston	233	208	205	-28	-12.0
Hubbard	215	249	234	19	8.8
Isanti	514	529	473	-41	-8.0
Itasca	528	469	445	-83	-15.7
Jackson	131	99	104	-27	-20.6
Kanabec	212	179	168	-44	-20.8
Kandiyohi	625	594	560	-65	-10.4
Kittson	43	38	45	2	4.7
Koochiching	122	126	119	-3	-2.5
Lac qui Parle	75	69	62	-13	-17.3
Lake	110	126	109	-1	-0.9
Lake of the Woods	47	30	42	-5	-10.6
Le Sueur	367	327	361	-6	-1.6
Lincoln	75	64	73	-2	-2.7
Lyon	366	376	378	12	3.3
McLeod	505	473	494	-11	-2.2

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Lincoln	75	64	73	-2	-2.7
Lyon	366	376	378	12	3.3
McLeod	505	473	494	-11	-2.2
Mahnomen	92	107	89	-3	-3.3
Marshall	123	105	105	-18	-14.6
Martin	287	206	229	-58	-20.2
Meeker	326	297	331	5	1.5
Mille Lacs	372	373	359	-13	-3.5
Morrison	442	472	431	-11	-2.5
Mower	549	633	572	23	4.2
Murray	103	83	90	-13	-12.6
Nicollet	419	416	399	-20	-4.8
Nobles	366	362	352	-14	-3.8
Norman	74	93	71	-3	-4.1
Olmsted	2,347	2,289	2,191	-156	-6.6
Otter Tail	666	619	642	-24	-3.6
Pennington	195	170	200	5	2.6
Pine	322	343	327	5	1.6
Pipestone	132	125	135	3	2.3
Polk	389	418	375	-14	-3.6
Pope	137	124	119	-18	-13.1
Ramsey	7,693	7,778	7,577	-116	-1.5
Red Lake	55	58	58	3	5.5
Redwood	212	197	198	-14	-6.6
Renville	160	195	180	20	12.5
Rice	796	794	748	-48	-6.0
Rock	147	128	116	-31	-21.1
Roseau	206	196	187	-19	-9.2
St. Louis	2,107	2,165	2,146	39	1.9
Scott	2,179	2,062	1,968	-211	-9.7
Sherburne	1,388	1,286	1,286	-102	-7.3
Sibley	203	192	207	4	2.0
Stearns	1,998	1,961	1,992	-6	-0.3
Steele	549	568	509	-40	-7.3
Stevens	123	112	124	1	0.8
Swift	100	125	95	-5	-5.0
Todd	356	315	322	-34	-9.6
Traverse	37	33	43	6	16.2

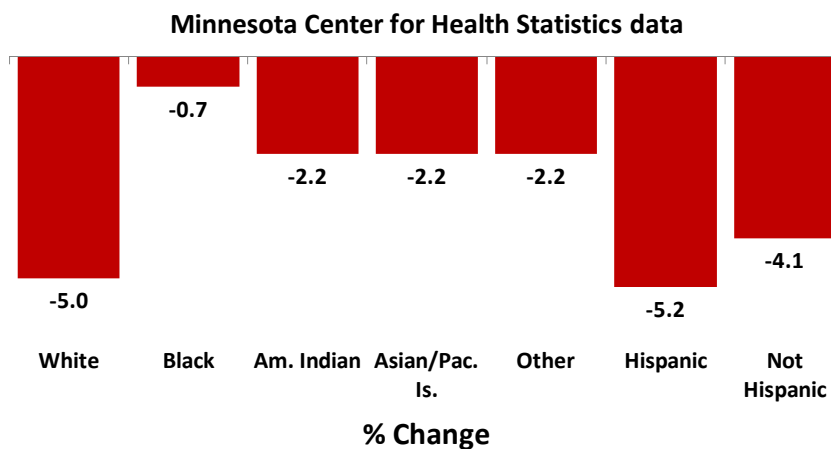
	2007	2008	2009	Number Change, 2007-2009	% Change, 2007- 2009
Wabasha	290	265	247	-43	-14.8
Wadena	187	189	189	2	1.1
Waseca	260	210	228	-32	-12.3
Washington	2,943	2,891	2,781	-162	-5.5
Watonwan	183	144	160	-23	-12.6
Wilkin	88	69	71	-17	-19.3
Winona	562	544	520	-42	-7.5
Wright	2,183	2,095	1,943	-240	-11.0
Yellow Medicine	137	125	121	-16	-11.7
Unknown County	1	3	2	1	100.0

Source: Minnesota Center for Health Statistics, Minnesota Department of Health

Births decline among all races and ethnicities

Births fell more among white women than among women of other races between 2007 and 2009. The smallest decline was among black mothers (-0.7 percent). Births to Hispanic women fell more than births to non-Hispanic women, -5.2 percent compared to -4.1 percent.

Births fall in all Minnesota racial and ethnic groups between 2007 and 2009

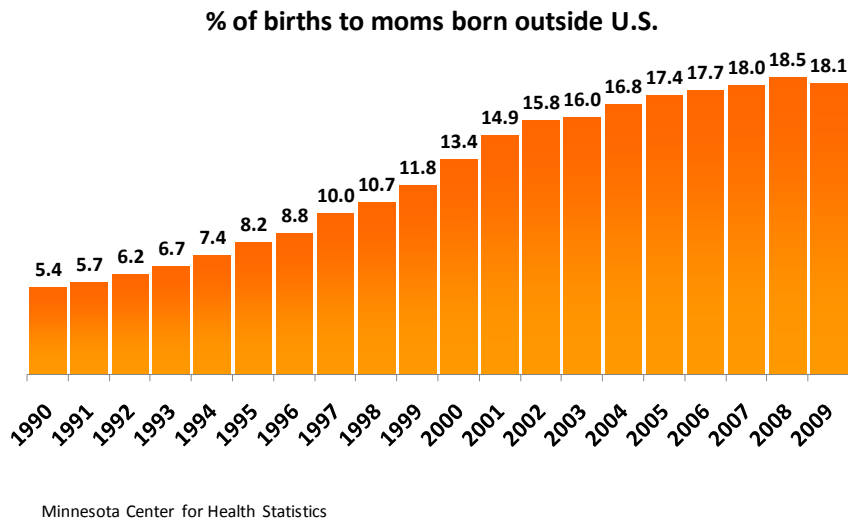


Births fall for both U.S.-born and foreign-born women

Births to women born outside the United State dropped 3.9 percent between 2007 and 2009, almost identical to the 4.0 percent decline for native-born women. This is a sharp change

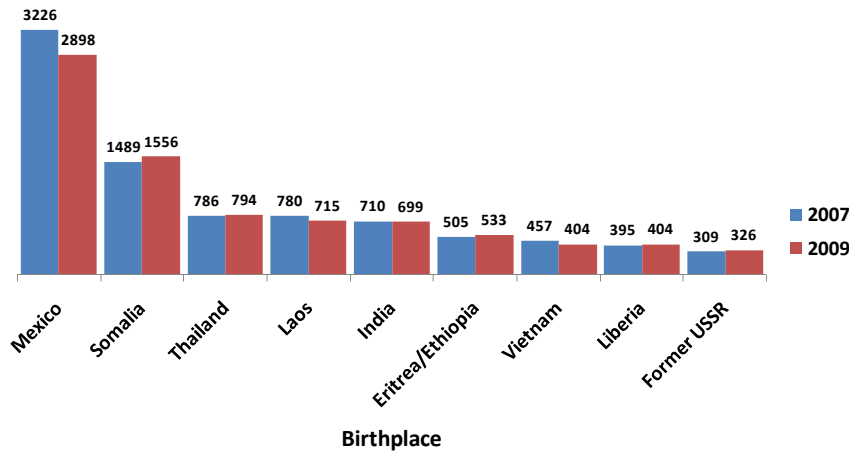
from the trend that prevailed in the 1990s and most of the 2000s, a period which saw a rapid rise in the number and proportion of births to foreign-born women.

Minnesota births to foreign-born mothers have tapered off



The decline in births to mothers born in Mexico was especially noticeable. Births to women born in Mexico rose rapidly during the early 2000s, and they are the largest group of foreign-born mothers. In 2007 there were 3,226 births to Mexican-born women. This fell to 3,087 in 2008 and 2,898 in 2009. The recent decline may indicate that Mexican-born families are no longer moving to Minnesota or have begun to leave the state as job opportunities have withered. Another possibility is that Mexican women, like others in Minnesota, are postponing births in the face of economic uncertainty. A combination of these factors is also possible.

Births fall among Minnesota women born in Mexico



Births are still above levels of the early 2000s

Despite the decline in births during the recession, births and birth rates remain higher than in the early 2000s. During this decade, the highest fertility rates occurred in 2007 and the lowest in 2001. The reasons for the rise earlier in the 2000s are not clear. While it is tempting to ascribe the recent decline in births to the recession, there are clearly many factors that affect people's decisions to have children.

American Community Survey findings on births differ from vital statistics

Births data from the American Community Survey do not show the same pattern as the vital statistics data. Because the measurement and age groups used are not the same, direct comparisons are not possible. For example, the count of 2008 births in the vital statistics system refers to births that occurred between January and December, 2008. By contrast, the American Community Survey asks if a woman had a birth in the past 12 months, not during a calendar year. A large share of births reported in the 2008 ACS actually occurred in 2007. Setting aside these methodological considerations, an examination of the data shows that in Minnesota the ACS consistently shows far more births than does the vital statistics information. The four-year total of births in the ACS is 8 percent higher than the four-year vital statistics total. Even if we use a lower estimate based on the margin of error in the ACS, the ACS number is 3 percent higher. If the higher margins of error are used, the ACS total is 14 percent higher. The vital statistics birth data is considered to be of very high quality, so it seems likely the ACS estimates are not ideal for examining fertility trends or assessing the relationship between birth trends and the recession. Possibly the Minnesota ACS sample includes a disproportionate number of women who have given birth recently.

Minnesota births in the American Community Survey 2006 to 2009

	Rate per 1000	MOE (Margin of Error)	Number	MOE (Margin of Error)	Low End	High End
2006	59	3	78,025	3,929	74,096	81,954
2007	60	3	77,894	3,685	74,209	81,579
2008	65	3	84,639	4,077	80,562	88,716
2009	58	3	75,041	3,837	71,204	78,878

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community
Survey

Data from American FactFinder, <http://factfinder2.census.gov/main.html>

Sources:

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